

### REMARKS

Claims 1, 7-8, 12 and 15-16 were rejected as being anticipated by Watanabe et al. (U.S. Patent 6,002,433 herein after "Watanabe").

#### *Independent claim 1:*

Watanabe does not teach or suggest a deficiency determining circuit... for determining a deficient pixel according to continuity of the deficient pixel candidate based on a plurality of comparison results over the plurality of screens, as recited in amended claim 1. For example, in one implementation, the deficiency determining circuit determines a deficient pixel according to continuity of the deficient pixel candidate based on comparison results over screens including moving images. Rather, Watanabe teaches 1) extracting a possibly defective pixel by comparing data of one image plane with a first threshold value; 2) accumulating a value of the possibly defective pixel by a predetermined number of exposure times; and 3) detecting a defective pixel by comparing the accumulated value of the possibly defective pixels with a second threshold value (see, for example, claim 2 of Watanabe). That is, Watanabe teaches determining a deficient pixel by comparing one image and the accumulated value of the predetermined number of images. Because claims 2-11 depend from independent claim 1, those claims are patentable for at least the same reasons that claim 1 is patentable.

#### *Independent claim 12:*

Watanabe does not teach or suggest detecting a deficient pixel in accordance with a plurality of comparison results obtained by a position storing step and a repeating step in which the recomparing step and the comparison result storing step a predetermined number of times over a plurality of screens, as recited in amended claim 12. Rather, as discussed above, Watanabe teaches determining a deficient pixel by comparing one image and the accumulated value of the predetermined number of images. Because claims 13-15 depend from independent claim 12, those claims are patentable for at least the same reasons that claim 12 is patentable.

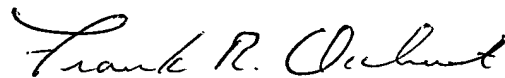
*Independent Claim 16:*

Watanabe does not teach or suggest detecting a deficient pixel in accordance with position information of deficient pixel candidates acquired by a repeating step in which the second-deficient-pixel-candidate detecting step, the coincidence determining step, and the updating step by a predetermined number of times over a plurality of screens, as recited in claim 16. Rather, as discussed above, Watanabe teaches determining a deficient pixel by comparing one image and the accumulated value of the predetermined number of images. Because claims 17-18 depend from independent claim 16, those claims are patentable for at least the same reasons that claim 16 is patentable.

Enclosed is a \$790.00 check for the Request for Continued Examination fee. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050, referencing Attorney Docket Number 10449-022001.

Respectfully submitted,

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